DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 212 506 SO 013 617

TITLE	The Way of Japan: A Series of Workshop Papers.
INSTITUTION	Arizona Univ., Tucson. East Asia Center.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	81
NOTE	40p.; Papers presented at the Way of Japan Workshop Series (Los Angeles, CA and Tucson, AZ, February-March, 1981).
AVAILABLE FROM	East Asia Center, Department of Oriental Studies, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721 ($1.00).
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Asian History; Asian Studies; Capitalism; Cross Cultural Studies; *Cultural Awareness; Foreign Countries; International Relations; Japanese; Language; Literature; Politics
IDENTIFIERS	Free Enterprise System; *Japan; Japanese Art; Japanese Culture; Japanese People

ABSTRACT

The seven essays in this booklet are summaries of presentations made at the Way of Japan Workshop Series. Topics range from traditional Japanese history and culture to modern Japanese society and U.S.-Japanese relations. A welcome from Yoshi Okawara, Japanese ambassador to the United States, delineates how American and Japanese may think in different ways because of language, culture, and tradition but how both are forced to deal with the same types of questions and problems. In "Tokuigawa Japan and the Coming of the West," Gail Lee Bernstein discusses the history, exploits, and evolution of Japan's warrior elite, the Samurai. Chisato Kitagawa gives examples of the phonology, morphology and word formation, syntax, and four types of writing systems found in Japanese in "The Japanese Language: An Outline." The history, content, and characteristics of Japanese literature are the topic of Edward Putzar in "Japanese Literature: Discovery of the Inner and Outer Worlds." In "Seeing Japanese Art at A Distance," Joshua Goldberg considers what is "Japanese" about traditional Japanese art. A discussion of postindustrial society of Japan--its population, economy, problems, and prospects--is the focus of Minoru Yanagihashi in "Japanese Society and Politics: A Summary View." Finally, Frank Gibney offers five salient features of Japan's Confucian capitalism and discusses how it differs from American free enterprise. Selected Readings and Bibliography are included. (NE)

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THE WAY OF JAPAN

A Series of Workshop Papers

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Distributed by the University of Arizona Oriental Studies Dept.

INTRODUCTION

The seven essays in this booklet are summaries of presentations made at the Way of Japan Workshop Series in February and March of 1981. The presentations covered topics ranging from traditional Japanese history and culture to modern Japanese society and U.S.-Japanese relations. The workshops were co-sponsored by the Consulate General of Japan at Los Angeles and the University of Arizona East Asia Center.

Workshop participants were privileged to receive a special welcome from His Excellency Yoshio Okawara, Japanese Ambassador to the United States, and to have as guests the Honorable Tsuneo Tanaka, Consul General of Japan, Vice Consul Tomoko Fukuda, and Mr. Frank Gibney of the Pacific Basin Institute.

It is our hope that the papers will provide useful readings for both students of Japan and for individuals with a special interest in one or more of the topics included. Reproduction of the papers for classroom use is encouraged. This booklet has been published by the University of Arizona East Asia Center with funds provided by the United States Office of Education.

Sincere thanks to Mayumi Hale for her artwork and calligraphy and to Kathy Mayberry for typing the papers. For information about additional copies, contact: Asian Resource Center, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721.

Ruth Patzman
Tucson
June 1981

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WELCOMING REMARKS

開催の辞

It gives me great pleasure to add my words of welcome to the participants in today's workshop on "The Way of Japan." Yesterday I spoke to a large gathering of Arizona business leaders in Phoenix about the current state of Japan-U.S. economic relations. I accepted that assignment eagerly because, as you know, they are somewhat troubled today by the question of automobile trade.

I accept today's assignment with equal pleasure because I realize that our bilateral relationship rests on much more than economics, that our close economic and political partnership rests ultimately on the broader foundations of the common interests of our two peoples. I firmly believe that educational workshops such as this one, which help our two peoples understand each other better, are just as important as workshops which help our businessmen better understand the intricacies of doing business in each other's markets. Indeed, these workshops are an excellent investment in making sure that our bilateral partnership continues to serve the vital interests of both nations.

The other day I read an article in the Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly in which the author warned of certain dangerous American myths

about Asia. Among other things, he said that it is wrong to assume that, because the world is becoming smaller through modern communications and the like, relations among peoples of different cultures are necessarily bound to become more harmonious.

The author referred to the worldwide spread of certain "aspects" of common culture among peoples, as evidenced by "blue jeans, pop music and fast food." But, he asserted, "it doesn't follow that a Japanese munching a hamburger is less Japanese than one who never has." He supported this contention by saying that "People are pervasively bound by their own culture, what they learn at their mother's knee, what they learn from their immediate associates, what is passed on to them as tradition and history." Most of this learning, he said, occurs within the domain of the home, irrespective of cross-cultural exchange.

I would agree with this point of view--but only to a certain point. Because we Japanese eat lots of hamburgers (there are over 200 McDonald's outlets in Japan), it certainly does not follow that we think in the same manner as an American who eats the same food. No, not at all.

Throughout our very rapid modernization of the past century or so--as Japan opened its doors to the outside world, assimilated foreign technology, and struggled to build its economy and society on modern foundations--we Japanese have retained much of our indigenous culture and traditions.

We have, for example, retained our rather unique methods of social organization: our concern for group rather than individual action, and our penchant for consensus rather than adversarial human relations.

Indeed, these aspects of Japanese culture played a crucial role in enabling us to adapt quickly and effectively to the challenges of modernization.

Still, however, I believe, we are equally in danger of erring if we dismiss the common elements of modern culture shared by Japanese and Americans today. And this is where I would part company from the observer I just quoted.

As advanced industrial nations, Japan and the United States have inherited a host of similar interests and similar challenges. To support our economies, for example, we are not only tied by the flourishing two-way trade between us, but also we are very much dependent on world trade and access to world resources and markets. To feed, clothe and shelter our peoples, we are hostage to fossil fuels. To move our city dwellers to and from work, we need effective means of mass transportation. At home, to mobilize the creative genius of our citizenry, and to achieve greater social justice and progress, we rely on similar democratic systems of self-government. We also look to technological innovation as a major tool in bettering ourselves, recognizing at the same time our environmental limits and the need to make technology better serve the requirements of human society. And abroad, in the international community, our two nations face a similar need to adjust to the complexities of a diverse and fast-changing world, and to contribute more effectively to the building of a stable and peaceful global order.

What I am suggesting, in short, is that while we Americans and Japanese may indeed think in different ways because of differences in

language, culture and tradition, we are both today forced to deal with the same types of questions, to search at the frontiers of human knowledge and experience together for answers to similar types of problems.

Forty years ago, the leading causes of death in Japan were tuberculosis, stroke and so on. Today, the leading public health problems are the same as in this country--cancer and heart disease. The McDonald's hamburger may not be important, but surely our common battle against man's oldest enemy is!

That outstanding scholar of Japan, and former U.S. Ambassador to my country, Edwin O. Keischauer, sums it up best, I think. He points to the different, particularistic aspects of Japanese society today, and he concludes: "Japan has not just mimicked the West. The Japanese have taken the modern aspects of our Western civilization, and have managed to keep their own Japaneseness at the same time.... Today, they're every bit as much at ease with modern civilization as we are."

And he adds, "It is not 'Western' civilization but 'modern' civilization that we both have today. The Japanese have a Japanese variant of it, and we have our variant. And today Americans and others are finding a growing attraction for the things that come out of Japan. The cultural exchange is working in both directions."

Truly the measure of our partnership is to be found in more than our common appetite for hamburgers. It is nothing less than the common challenges and goals shared by our two peoples. And because our different historical and cultural traditions enable us to bring different perspectives to these challenges and goals, Japanese and Americans today have much to learn from one another, and much to share with one another.

Your workshop today explores Japan's premodern history, the age of castles and samurai. This history is just as important to an understanding of Japanese culture today as, for example, the history of pioneers on the American frontier is to an understanding of American culture. I would also remind you that both Japan's "feudal" history and America's pioneer history are equally removed from the concerns of our contemporary societies.

It has often been said that among nations there are no friendships, only common interests that may shift with events. As far as the Japanese-American partnership is concerned, I believe, this does not apply. Despite our differences in history and custom, our interests as citizens of industrial democracies are virtually identical. This is the unchanging fact which makes our alliance indestructible, and genuine friendship possible.

His Excellency Yoshio Okawara

TOKUGAWA JAPAN & THE COMING OF THE WEST

西洋の到来と日本

Anyone who has seen the television ratings for James Clavelle's Shōgun is aware of the appeal of feudal Japan to American audiences. People who know nothing else about Japan know about samurai swords, samurai suicide, and samurai honor. Ask an undergraduate to name one famous Japanese and he will answer Toshiro Mifune, the actor best known in this country for his samurai roles. Show the film "Seven Samurai," and you will draw an appreciative crowd of samurai movie buffs. When a Japanese historian teaching at a mid-western university renamed his premodern Japanese history course "Japan in the Age of the Samurai," his enrollments increased.

We can probably find several good reasons why Americans love to dwell on Japan's warrior elite. Their swashbuckling exploits, their extraordinary courage and loyalty, their martial skills and their code of honor-bushidō--evoke a masculine ideal that is especially appealing to young men looking for similar qualities in themselves. The samurai is Japan's version of the American cowboy.

But it is time to go beyond the romantic exploits of the medieval samurai in order to talk about the equally remarkable, though far less publicized accomplishments of the samurai in early modern times. By

1800, the free-wheeling, illiterate and bellicose retainers of samurai movie fame had been transformed into closely-controlled, educated and cultivated members of their lord's bureaucracy and as such, they served in various governmental capacities within their feudal domains. Civil servants supported by a fixed stipend, this hereditary class of warriors was removed from the land to live in castle-towns, where their presence encouraged the development of an urban lifestyle.

To be sure, samurai continued to wear their swords, a privilege reserved for members of their class alone. They also enjoyed the legal right to use their swords on disrespectful commoners. Still, the most important legacy of the samurai class to modern Japan is not swordplay and ritual suicide--activities irrelevant to the needs of their modernizing country--but literacy, training in statecraft, and patriotic awareness. More than simply a warrior elite, by 1800 the samurai was also an urban intellectual and political elite.

Although samurai comprised only about six percent of Japan's thirty million people, their influence was felt well out of proportion to their numbers. After the overthrow of the Shōgun's government in 1868, the new Meiji government, itself led by samurai, launched an era of modernizing reforms that relied for their implementation on men of samurai origins who staffed the new, centralized bureaucracy, imperial university, school system, and military services. While the feudal system was dismantled and samurai class privileges legally abolished, Japan's warrior aristocrats, for the most part, neither resisted change nor remained indifferent to it, but actively participated in the transformation of their country into a modern nation-state. Whether they served in the new government ministries or chose

to remain outside the government to work as journalists, social critics, and political party organizers, they remained politically engagé--patriots committed to Japan's survival in an age of crisis.

The samurai, in short, evolved into modern Japan's political leaders and intelligentsia, the architects of the modern Japanese nation. The picturesque castles that were once their homes became the site of Japan's leading commercial and industrial cities: Ōsaka, Sendai, Nagoya, Tokyo. The Shōgun's castle in Tokyo for the past one hundred years has been occupied by the Imperial family. And swords must be registered with the police.

What happened to bushidō? Samurai loyalty, originally focused on the feudal lord, after the downfall of the Shōgun was transferred to the emperor and became the basis of modern Japanese nationalism. Loyalty to the emperor, as the symbol of the nation, was a virtue taught to all members of Japanese society. An intense expression of that patriotic loyalty was seen in the kamikaze pilots who, during the second world war, drew inspiration for their suicide missions from treatises on samurai principles of honor. Some view the contemporary employee's lifetime loyalty to his company as another example of the continuity of samurai-like values, or at least their pragmatic reworking to fit the needs of the modern nation. Employees who undergo a rigorous training period, in some cases complete with meditation practice and martial arts classes, call to mind the days of the samurai. Thus, values and practices associated with the samurai class have spread to all classes of society and continue to influence Japanese life long after the demise of the samurai class itself.

Gail Lee Bernstein

THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE: AN OUTLINE

1. Phonology.

Japanese has a relatively simple phonological system. One might say that meaningful sounds in Japanese are only those given in (1).

(1) (a) Vowels: i, e, a, u, o.

(b) Consonants: p, b, t, d, s, z, k, g, h, m, n, r, y, w.

A typical Japanese sentence, transcribed in Roman alphabet, would be something like one in example (2).

(2) Naomi-mo kimoti-ga ii sakaya-e sake-o nomi ni ki-ta.
too feeling good bar drink-to come-Past

'Naomi too came to drink sake in a bar which has a good mood.' If you look carefully, there is little problem in identifying this string of sounds into syllables: a syllable is usually composed of either a consonant and a vowel combination, or a vowel alone. Japanese is also a pitch accent language, utilizing only high and low pitch as a rule. So as shown in (3), hasi is a chopstick, and hasi is a bridge.

(3) (a) hasi 'chopstick'

(4) (b) hasi 'bridge'

2. Morphology and Word-formation.

Racing quickly to morphology and word-formation, let me introduce to you a Japanese expression in example (4).

(4) Ken-wa Naomi-ni sake-o nomi-hazime-sase-rare-hazime-ta-daroo-ka-ne.
drink-begin-cause-passive-begin-past-presume-Q-suppose

'I wonder if Ken began to be forced to begin to drink sake by Naomi.'

The underlined part of the Japanese sentence in (4) has a verb stem nomi 'drink,' followed by a string of suffix-like auxiliary elements, corresponding collectively to the underlined part in English translation. Japanese is a so-called agglutinate language, and (4) is a good example of agglutination.

3. Syntax.

Sentences like (2) and (4) also illustrate a basic principle of Japanese grammar, as characterized in (5).

(5) (a) Verb expressions always come at the sentence final position.

(b) Noun phrases are generally followed by case particles (e.g., ga 'subject-marker' or 'nominative'; o 'object marker' or 'accusative,' etc.).

(c) Modifying elements always come before the head (e.g., in (2) kimoti-ga ii 'feeling is good' comes, as a modifier, before sakaya 'bar,' the head).

4. Writing.

As for writing, you will encounter four types of writing systems if you go to Japan, as identified in (6)-(9).

(6) KANJI: (a) 女 'woman' (子) (b) 女女女 'noisy'

(c) 恐 ('fear') ((i) 工 'carpenter's measuring stick';
(ii) 凡 '(from) a picture of groping hands';
(iii) 心 'a picture of a heart')

(7) HIRAGANA: e.g., (a) あ (a) (b) み (mi) (c) ぬ (nu) (d) め (me)

(8) KATAKANA: e.g., (a) ア (a) (b) メ (me) (c) リ (ri) (d) カ (ka)

(9) ROMAJI: (a) Hepburn system: shi, chi, ji

(b) National system: si, ti, zi

Chisato Kitagawa

JAPANESE LITERATURE: DISCOVERY OF INNER & OUTER WORLDS

日本文学 内と外の世界の発見

The first written literature of Japan appears in the eighth century and contains much that reflects the oral tradition of earlier literature by way of songs and anecdotes as well as local traditions in Japan. In addition to expressing a range of common feelings about human relations, love, the natural world of land and sea and the creatures inhabiting those realms, early Japanese literature reflects the far-ranging and complex way of viewing the world that may have been the origin of all that we mean by religion. Early Japanese literature thus contains views of creation and explains the forces of nature in spiritual terms. It also reveals the feeling that humans might be able to influence these forces that surround and control life through language, prayer, giving words and reasons to the life-sustaining and life-destroying activities of nature. Specifically, early Japanese literature expresses belief in the power of words to manipulate forces of nature (the quality called koto-dama) and provides an effective link between what humans feel within them (emotions, desires) and the infinity of change that is the universe. What we see as religious elements in early Japanese literature are functionally differentiated today among various arts and sciences (secular art, medicine, physics

and so forth) as specialized visions of the psycho-social dialogue, the dialogue between inner and outer words, between man as perceiver and the objects and forces he sees apart from himself. Songs and poems in The Collection of a Myriad Leaves (Man'yoshu; eighth century) often reveal this partly religious origin of Japanese literature, as do the early histories.

Elements of the religious vision of the world remained in Japanese literature throughout the secularization of the arts that began in the Heian Period of the ninth century, although the introduction of Buddhism and its acceptance as the dominant religious structure or philosophy had, by this time, added a wealth of new ideas, particularly in-depth psychology, to Japanese intellectual life. We find this strengthening of vision and its ability to discriminate in thought and language a significant part of The Tale of Genji, the great eleventh-century novel that describes the lives of three generations of Heian aristocrats with almost modern sensitivity to the ambivalences of the heart and the hidden desires humans carry into highly civilized settings. The same growing awareness of human complexity (again, much nurtured by Buddhist thought) appears in The Pillow Book of the same period. In poetry, too, there appeared that secularization of sense we recognize as essential to humanistic arts.

This general progression from religion to secular and humanistic awareness reached a significantly new form about 1400 A.D. in the transformation of Japanese theatre by Zeami, creator of the Noh drama, who received a classical education in literature of Heian at the hands of Nijo Yoshimoto, one of the great medieval literary figures. The Noh plays, often focusing upon the thoughts and memories of an

individual person for their theme, demonstrate how deeply Japanese consciousness had penetrated the potentials of the mind, revealing awareness of the other in man: the unknown, the subconscious, the deep and ghostly levels of the mind that often seem to be the real sources of human action. Thus the ghosts of characters in Noh drama can be recognized as prefiguring the ghostly other of the mind and the source of those feelings and ideas that have become the major topic of modern literature. Japanese literature could begin to ask, then: Who are we? What is human nature? How can we live?

Beginning in the late seventeenth century, with the stories of Ihara Saikaku and the puppet plays of Chikamatsu Monzaemon, Japanese literature took on a particularly modern quality in focusing on the lives of townsmen in the great cities of Osaka and Edo (Tokyo). To the duality of mind earlier discovered was added a new fragmentation of the spirit brought about by the Tokugawa government's adoption of neo-Confucianism as the official philosophy of the state. The split between inner and outer worlds was formalized as the tension between duty and human feeling (giri-ninjo), and it was the government's insistence that obedience to the state must at all times take precedence. With a wisdom that was as blind as it was profound, the Tokugawa government sought to proscribe the loyalties engendered by love, even to the extent of controlling brothel districts as places where the emotions of love might be released within a walled world.

The conflicts of duty and love provided an immediately realistic subject for fiction and the theatre, and this subject was approached in a particularly modern way by Ueda Akinari in a collection of nine ghost stories published in 1776. The Tales of Moonlight and Rain

(Ugetsu monogatari) was mostly derived from older literature, but Akinari's recasting of the tales was inspired by his experience as a physician aware of the complex depths of human motives. It was Akinari's genius that he could recognize intuitively the ghosts in his stories as manifestations of the subconscious mind; consequently, these tales stand at the threshold of the modern awareness in literature that consciously explores both the psycho-social dialogue and the dialogue of the judgmental and socially given mind with its own powerfully effective but still unknown depths.

A century after Akinari, Japanese intellectual life entered the creative international modern world, enriching itself with the literature of Europe and beginning the dialogue between Japanese tradition and those of the West. Japanese fiction of the twentieth century has thus been able to draw upon the conscious techniques of the modern world to find new depths in older Japanese literature and to make that literature, along with many aspects of ancient Japanese tradition, vital and supportive ideas within a continuously changing present. For students of literature, of course, it is particularly important to notice the process or the history of the exploration of the mind represented by a national literature, and the literature of Japan clearly demonstrates this process to have moved in a course parallel to ways followed by distant culture of the West.

Edward Putzar

SEEING JAPANESE ART AT A DISTANCE

> It is bad to study stars and clouds as flowers and stones. I must let my senses wander as my thoughts, my eyes see without looking. Carlyle said that how to observe was to look, but I say that it is rather to see, and the more you look the less you will observe.
>
> Thoreau, STANDING AT A DISTANCE

離れて見る日本の美術

Japanese art under close inspection reveals its traditional character. Since a traditional art is defined as the creative expression of a society in which every form of creation--painting, sculpture, architecture, and even the slightest articles of everyday use--is fashioned not only for its utility but as an appropriate revelation of the structure and psyche of that society, Japanese art is traditional.

It is essential to try to grasp what is "Japanese" about traditional Japanese art. For one thing, Japanese art is never remote or isolated but instead, reconciles the life of action with the life of contemplation, practice with principle, thought with feeling, knowledge with being, and work as a way towards growth and discovery.

Strong emotional moods and values, also those of a susceptive and appreciative nature are more esteemed in Japanese art than works of art with an active social or moral philosophy and ethical highmindedness. This is not to say that the Japanese are somehow

unpossessed of these qualities. But as personality itself is an emotional and not an intellectual experience, the greatest achievement in both Japanese art as within Japanese society is a synthesis of the personal or the individual within a larger unity. It is the parts that make up the sum total which acquire greater independence and individuality within the context of the whole.

Devotion to ancient models and the uncanny ability towards unlearned intuitionalism in a restrained and controlled expression characterizes Japanese art in particular. At first glance it seems that this emphasis on the concrete subordinates the universal, but as one studies Japanese art, it is the realization that it is through the concrete and the particular that the universal is manifested and experienced. Even in Japanese landscape painting the Japanese insistence on themes of social and religious life as in the love of nature was not simply viewed idealistically or abstractly. Far from the sphere of symbolic or intellectual representation, the Japanese with their bred-in-the-bone zen have delighted in the simplest statement which came closest to life itself. One is reminded of Basho, the seventeenth century haiku poet: "When composing a verse let there not be a hair's breadth separating your mind from what you write; composition of a poem must be done in an instant, like a woodcutter felling a huge tree or a swordsman leaping at a dangerous enemy."

Japanese art can (perhaps) be summed up as the problem of decorative design; or to put it another way, the working within a limited space. This is not by any means to be thought of in a pejorative sense because pattern-recognition or composition is essentially formal and non-intellectual. The "Japanese" perception of space, for example,

is precisely that of "nothingness." It is the "absence" that is wrapped around all objects, a state of receptivity or "open awareness" as in Zen painting or haiku poetry; or as an "unborn" surface readying itself for the fundamental stamp of the craftsman on his creation. We, too, in the West experience the flux and reflux of objects in space, but often only in the duality of a subject-object relationship, a "filling in." To the Japanese sensibility, indefinite space is the fullness of the ground, the surround, and the beginning of the "ten thousand things" of creation.

Despite the inherent danger of the Japanese tendency towards lavish ornamentation as an end instead of a means, the quiet restraint and formality of "geometric" or "artificial" space under the hand of a master artist or craftsman permutates and becomes "inhabited" or "natural" space. Herein lies one of the keys to the understanding of Japanese art: the phenomenon of direct intuitive vision and creative intelligence interfused with the love of natural beauty in what Emerson called "Ever fresh the broad creation/a divine improvisation...."

Joshua Goldberg

JAPANESE SOCIETY & POLITICS: A SUMMARY VIEW

日本の社会と政治

INTRODUCTION

It has been rather common in recent years to describe Japan as a "postindustrial society," one of about only a dozen countries in the world that qualifies for this distinction. The term was first coined by David Riesman and later developed by Daniel Bell. It is a concept that can be used to effectively describe the enormous changes that have occurred in Japan since the end of World War II.

What is a postindustrial society? It is a society which has reached a high level of development and has the following essential characteristics. First, it is a society in which the majority of the labor force is employed in the service or tertiary sector, which includes such highly skilled tasks and services as banking, insurance, real estate, entertainment, government, education, transportation, communication, etc. In contrast, in a "preindustrial society," the majority is engaged in the manufacturing sector. Since 1968, Japan has had a majority of its labor force in the service sector, and the percentage has steadily risen. Second, in a postindustrial society, the service sector generates the largest share of the gross national product (GNP).

As early as 1963, the service sector in Japan accounted for over 50 percent of the GNP. Third, a postindustrial society is characterized by a high level of affluence and material well-being, and where, relatively speaking, the wealth is widely distributed, thus creating a large middle class. By the mid-1960's, the per capita income of Japanese had become large enough that they began to buy appliances and other consumer durables and luxury goods. Japan, like other advanced industrial societies, has a growing white-collar, urban class that has considerable purchasing power. The average Japanese family's income, when all fringe benefits were included, exceeded that of the average American family in 1978. Public opinion polls in the 1970's revealed that 90 percent of the Japanese considered themselves to be middle class. Finally, a postindustrial society is distinguished by its knowledge-intensive industries. The most phenomenal growth in Japanese industry has been in electronics and other high technology fields.

POPULATION

Japan has a population that has stabilized at a little over 115 million. In a country the size of Montana, the population is concentrated along narrow bands of habitable space so that 63 percent of the people live in only 15 percent of the land space. Although Japan is technically not an overpopulated country because its economy can easily support the population, it is still the most densely populated country in the world if only habitable land is considered. Rapid urbanization created this overcrowding, with a massive population shift, especially of young people, from the rural areas to the large cities; however, this migration into the metropolitan centers had leveled off in recent years.

Presently, farmers comprise less than 15 percent of the population, and many of them are engaged in nonagricultural jobs for their primary income.

Japan's population is also remarkable for its homogeneity. Foreigners comprise less than one percent of the total population, and the Koreans, numbering approximately 600,000 are the largest minority group. This homogeneity is the result of the geographical insularity of Japan as well as the long history of self-imposed isolation.

Although the population has stabilized in terms of growth rate, it has been changing in its age structure. By the late 1970's, there was increasing concern about the "graying of Japan," i.e., the growing number of elderly. This problem arises from several trends in Japanese society. For one thing, those who were born in the early postwar baby boom are now reaching middle age and at the same time there is a continuing decrease in the birthrate. More important, however, is the dramatic extension in life expectancy. Japan achieved the longest life expectancy in the world in 1977 (77.9 years for females and 72.7 years for males). Therefore the care for the aged will become a major problem for Japan. The government has paid little attention to the care of the elderly, for until recent years, the elderly were taken care of by their children. However, with the trend toward smaller nuclear families, parents can no longer assume that their children will care for them.

ECONOMY

Today Japan is the third largest economic superpower, and its rate of economic growth has been more rapid than that of the other

great industrial nations. The Japanese success in being efficient and having a high level of production is based on some fundamental Japanese characteristics that make their example quite different from that of the other postindustrial societies. A few of the characteristics need to be discussed. First, the group is more important than the individual in Japanese society. Teamwork and mutual trust among members are developed. The Japanese have perfected superb organizational skills and know how to work with one another in cooperative group activity. Participation is strongly encouraged, and decisions are arrived at by consensus after lengthy consultations. The stress is on harmony within the group and the avoidance of open confrontations. Second, there is a strong work ethic tradition. The Japanese work hard and take pride in their jobs. Under the lifetime employment practice, workers develop a strong sense of identification and loyalty with their company or organization. Third, the Japanese are highly educated and skilled. About 95 percent of the young people finish high school and close to 40 percent go on to colleges and universities. Japan's literacy rate (99.9%) is the highest in the world. Finally, there is close coordination and cooperation between government and business. This intimate relationship has led to the myth of "Japan, Inc.," i.e., the government and big business working together as a monolith. The interests of big business and the government did coincide in the 1960's to give the impression that they were always supporting each other, but in the early 1970's, their interests began to diverge slightly, and differences in policy objectives emerged. Nevertheless, the relationship between government and business is a close association and is not an adversary relationship as found in many of the other postindustrial countries.

POLITICS

Since World War II, Japan has been continuously governed by the "conservatives," except for a brief socialist-led coalition government (1947-48). The present conservative, pro-big business party, the Liberal Democratic party (LDP), was formed when two of the conservative parties merged in 1955. It has provided the political and economic leadership that has given Japan over 25 years of political stability and over a decade of rapid economic growth. The LDP and two other factors, the bureaucracy and big business, form what has been called the "Establishment"; they govern Japan and are the major factors in the political process, but they by no means completely dominate the political scene. The picture is more complex because there are other political parties and interest groups whose role and influence can be significant from time to time, depending on the circumstances and the particular issue involved. Even among the Establishment there are differences of opinion because of changes in the attitude toward economic growth. Priorities have shifted from high economic growth rate to a more balanced and moderate growth with more money being spent on improving social welfare programs. A broad cross-section of the society has become concerned about the high price paid in pursuing a policy of rapid economic growth.

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

The Japanese economy faces long-range problems in rising labor costs and high energy bills. Through policy directives and other means, the government has encouraged Japanese companies to move out of industries lacking comparative labor advantage and to move from energy-intensive and resource-hungry industries into knowledge-intensive

industries. Government "guidances" have met with opposition from certain business groups, but policy guidance is one of the most effective means by which the government is trying to solve long-range problems.

As a result of the earlier goal or rapid economic growth and the consequent neglect in spending funds on social capital, the social foundations of Japanese society needs a great deal of improvement. The housing shortage, lack of parks and recreational facilities, increase in traffic accidents, inadequate sewage system, pollution problems that have reached levels where they have become a serious hazard to the health of the people, all of these are clearly problems that must have high priority. They are serious problems that will require constant attention and the commitment of large amount of resources. But the Japanese have handled systematically and quite effectively a series of crises. Japan was able to recover much more quickly from the damaging oil shock of 1973 and from the recession of 1978-79 caused by the sudden increase in OPEC oil prices than the other major industrialized nations.

Japan stands today as probably the most vulnerable of the advanced industrial states to outside changes and pressures. This vulnerability has caused Japan to work harder to solve its problems and to protect itself. It had to set the pace and at the same time be flexible and resilient to sudden changes. This ability of the Japanese to respond to challenges provides the strongest note of optimism for the future development of Japanese society.

Minoru Yanagihashi

U.S.-JAPANESE RELATIONS & DOING BUSINESS WITH JAPAN

日米関係と日本との商取り引き

The working partnership between the United States and Japan, in the free enterprise tradition, is a competitive partnership. The intensity of Japan's competition in international markets--however disconcerting to some sectors of American industry--should not blind us to the contributions Japan makes to the world free enterprise society. In fact, the Japanese businessman has much to teach us. We should use and apply his lessons, even if he approaches business and trade with a set of premises quite different from ours.

If I were asked to describe the Japanese and their sort of free enterprise in a word or two, I would borrow a phrase used by a visiting Japanese professor in London some time ago and call them the Confucian Capitalists. The Confucian Capitalists have made a great deal of progress over the last twenty years; most Americans are aware of the phenomenal strides the Japanese economy has made. What I am going to talk about today is how Japan's Confucian Capitalists differ from American free enterprisers, who developed, as we all know, out of the Protestant work ethic--and yet how in many ways we are similar. After all, we can hardly blame the Japanese at this late point in the twentieth century for taking to heart Calvin Coolidge's old slogan 'the business

of this country is business' and running away with it. Here are some of the salient features of Japanese capitalism and the Japanese economy, as we see it today.

There are at least five big lessons Japanese business can teach us. The first is its tendency to look at the world as a unified market. We in this country have always prided ourselves on our export sales but generally regarded them as simply the icing on the cake compared to what we do domestically. The Japanese also have a preponderately domestic market. Even in its biggest export years, most of Japan's production is absorbed by the domestic economy. At best, less than 15 percent of Japanese production goes into exports, a far smaller figure, say, than that of the Federal Republic of Germany. Nonetheless, the Japanese quickly realize that it is generally exports that give a company its growth margins and provide its cutting edge of competition. After World War II they decided systematically to view the whole world as a market. On the basis of what they could produce and what the world wanted, they set out to rearrange their business priorities. In this day they have put into practice the famous old Marshall Field comment: "Give the customer what he wants." Akio Morita, the Chairman of Sony, likes to tell by way of illustration, the classic story of the two salesmen who were being sent to a newly developing African nation to sell shoes. One of them wired back after a week on the scene; "No business here; no one wears shoes, returning immediately." The other, after the same study, wired his company: "Tremendous business opportunities here. No one wears shoes. Send 15,000 pairs as a start." I need not say which salesman was the Japanese.

The second mark of Japanese business in our day is what you might call innovative adaptation. The Japanese have long been denounced as a race of imitators. Many Japanese, among them people like the Nobel Prize-winner Leona Ezaki, have reproached their countrymen with being too conformist and not creative enough. Yet we must understand that most modern development and engineering research is done in groups rather than by single geniuses. The legend of the lonely inventor toiling in his garret and coming up with a magnificent discovery is too often merely a legend. The Japanese are magnificent at working together. You might call them the world's committeemen par excellence. They will adapt, they will study and they will come out with a distinctive product which is generally in the end an invention in its own terms. This explains why the Japanese have been so far ahead in the fields they chose, first in electronics, next shipbuilding and now, as we know, automobiles. They are going ahead in the fields of semiconductors and computers with the same zeal that characterized earlier efforts. It is this flare for innovative adaptation, for getting the best out of a product concept and then supplementing this with the best they can do in engineering and marketing that does distinguish Japanese business from others.

The third mark is very important indeed. That is the Japanese businessman's capacity for planning and his ability to look at the long-term rather than the short-term future. The Japanese entrepreneur likes his profits as well as the next man, but he is not motivated by the worship of today's "bottom line" as we are here. He thinks more to tomorrow. Japanese businessmen are quite happy to sustain break-evens or losses for a period of time if they see that they are getting a share of the market and expanding it. They will in time through economies and through

development of their own marketing techniques be able to make that 'bottom-line' profit. Therefore, the patience (and capacity) to wait for his money is one of the things that has made the Japanese businessman so formidable.

The Japanese often tell the classic story about their three great military leaders of medieval times: Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu, who were severally given the problem of how to make a quiet nightingale sing. Oda, a rough, blunt warrior type, said: "If the nightingale doesn't sing, I will make it sing." Hideyoshi was more subtle in his approach: "If the nightingale doesn't sing," he said, "I have many ways to persuade it." When the question was finally put to Tokugawa, he said simply: "If the nightingale doesn't sing, I will wait." In the end, of course, it was Tokugawa who beat the survivors of the other two and went on to found the Tokugawa Shogunate, which lasted for 250 years.

Many of his descendants in business seem to have taken that lesson to heart. The most striking thing that hits an American doing business in Tokyo these days is that the Japanese do not have the same pressures for immediate profitability as we do in the United States. As a result, they are able to spend more time on developing, working out their market techniques, and getting the best possible product tested before they even get into the market.

This tendency for long-term planning is, of course, evident all through the Japanese economy. The Japanese made their mark in the postwar world by using the stored savings of their people for capital investments. They practiced 'supply-side' economics long before the Reagan administration. They are prepared to take a great deal of time in

getting their Return on Investment. Not long ago I visited the Ogishima Plant of Nippon-Kokan, one of the world's greatest steel producers. It is a marvel--rather like a good version of Charlie Chaplin's industrial comedy-horror-story of Modern Times. Inside this extraordinary plant, built on acres of filled land in what used to be Tokyo Bay you can walk for a whole kilometer without seeing more than three or four people. The plant is almost completely computerized, so that when orders come in they are processed automatically in the marketing department, which then sends the request also by computer, to the production side so that they know exactly how much is needed and how much is to be produced.

This steel mill, which is quite possibly the world's most modern cost about three times as much as an ordinary steel mill. It was an expenditure which few American steel companies would have been prepared to make. Yet Nippon-Kokan and its banks, those tutelary guardians of the Japanese businessman, were prepared to make it. Now there are many reasons why American steel companies would hesitate at this investment. Stockholders' returns, government restrictions, union activity, management problems all play their part. They are missing something in the long run. For over a period of time this vast plant, which cost three times as much as normal to produce, will cost three times less to operate. It takes 7,000 workers where at a normal steel mill it takes 30,000 to operate it. What happened to the workers? They are working elsewhere at N.K.K. No one was fired. The unions were consulted in advance. In fact, the whole mill was planned for about two years before even a site was selected. A very interesting object lesson.

The fourth mark of Japanese business is that it is people-centered. The average American company president, if asked where his first

loyalties lie, would say naturally: to the stockholders. If you ask the average Japanese company president, he is more apt to say: to the employees. In Japan the corporation is thought of as a family. People are hired for life. This is in accord with old Confucian principles, but in modern Japan Confucian loyalty has become a two-way street, with the boss equally obligated to the worker--or more.

The Japanese like to say that they hire the "whole person" rather than someone who is asked to fill a specific job slot. This attitude pervades most of Japanese industry. It was not always so, but through a combination of factors it has become so. When a person is hired by Toyota, he is hired not as a mechanic but as a Toyota man who will be a mechanic. If he is hired by Mitsubishi and becomes an economic analyst, he has been hired first to be a Mitsubishi man; specialization comes later. These are important distinctions. This notion that people are hired for themselves helps give Japanese industry a solidarity and a competitiveness which most of the rest of us lack. This is not to say that "people-centered" buisness has been unknown in America. It used to be a very big factor. But it seems to me that in many of our corporations it has been forgotten.

The fifth big lesson which we learn from Japanese business is the ability of the Japanese company to concentrate its energies. This is really an outgrowth of the other four. There is very little dissipation of energy in the Japanese company. On the contrary there is a concentration of resources, a concentration of manpower, a concentration of objectives. There are very few people in a Japanese company who have their résumés in their inside pocket waiting for a chance to go across the street to the competitors for a few dollars more. Employees feel they

are committed to that company as a permanent thing. The company tends to share this feeling. In Confucian ethics it is not the individual who counts. It is the relationship--the relationship between people or between people and institutions. Japanese business exemplifies this ethic.

The good side of Confucian capitalism shows itself markedly in the economies which Japanese are able to achieve in research and development areas. It is generally better to have a man working on the same problem for a long time than to have people come into the laboratories as birds of passage, in the knowledge that they might go somewhere the next year. Of course, there is a certain loss in flexibility here, but it is outweighed by the other gains of this life-time employment system.

There is, finally, one more distinguishing mark to Japanese Confucian Capitalism. That is the stimulus of adversity. There is nothing really like it. We in this country really have not felt the stimulus of true adversity for a great many years. The Japanese lived with adversity through WW II. At the end of WW II they were not only physically devastated but spiritually in a state of shock. They had never lost a war, never sustained such a challenge not merely to their way of life, but to the things in which they believed. People may react to adversity in different ways. Perhaps because the Japanese have historically had a rough life on their islands--the hostages variously to typhoons, earthquakes, disastrous fires, catastrophy--they set out to rebuild in a calm, matter-of-fact way. They logically decided to concentrate on economic matters rather than on the political or military things which had turned out badly before. This reconstruction was helped powerfully by the American Occupation--one of the underrated

factors in the success of Japanese business in the 1970's and 80's. The Occupation was on the whole benevolent. Though we went sometimes to absurd lengths trying to change the Japanese into carbon copies of what we thought good democrats should be, at the same time we gave them a needed catalyst to work for basic change. It renewed Japan's movement toward a democratic society, which had begun after all 100 years before in the Meiji Restoration of 1868, but which had been throttled early in the twentieth century and thereafter by increasing dosages first of bureaucratic authoritarianism and ultimately of the militarism that helped bring on World War II. The U.S. Occupation would not have been such a success in most other places in Asia, if not the world, because it would not have had the same background of progressive modernization and a strong substratum of democratic instincts that we found to work with in Japan.

The success of Japanese business conversely has for the first time in recent years made Americans a bit more reflective. In watching the success of these Confucian Capitalists, who have raised a great economic edifice based on principles and premises in many ways far different from our own, we may have come to realize that international education is not a one-way street. It is now possible, advisable, if not indeed absolutely necessary to look at and learn from the Japanese just as the Japanese in the post-war period and before learned from us.

Frank Gibney

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